

Aggieville patrons can enjoy fun foodie favorites from dusk to dawn



BRIDGET BERAN
THE COLLEGIAN

Throughout Aggieville, there are countless options for hungry stomachs. With a multitude of restaurants packed into a small area, you're never too far from something delicious. While each establishment offers up great choices, a few meals stand out above the rest.

Noon

In 2011, The Cozy Inn, a Salina staple since 1922, opened up shop in Aggieville. Though it's not the place to go if you want to customize your meal, its onion-topped burger is second to none. The burgers only come one way, which Cozy calls, "with onion and attitude." You can order in increments of one, six, 12 and up to a bag of 24 burgers.

Considering the burgers practically melt in your mouth, you might want to just assume you'll need more than one.

3 p.m.

Chipotle raspberry bean dip may not initially seem like the best snack, but So Long Saloon and Taco Lu-

cha, jointly run by the same management team, do it in a way that works. Unique to Aggieville, the onion-cream cheese base is mixed with a black bean and raspberry salsa, and topped with pepper jack cheese.

Stir it all together before dipping your tortilla chips in and your taste buds will thank you.

6 p.m.

If you're looking for a top dinner spot, you can't go wrong with a visit to Aggie Station. Their chef recommends the pork chop and after one bite, you'll understand why. A perfect amount of seasoning and an insane amount of tenderness makes this superb. The mashed potatoes served on the side compliment it perfectly. It's topped off with French-sliced apples, which add a nice lightness to the plate.

A fairly fresh face in Aggieville, Fuzzy's Taco Shop serves up prime flavor on a college-student budget. Its tempura shrimp burrito is a delicious twist from a tradition chicken or beef burrito. There's no worry of getting shortchanged on a visit to Fuzzy's either. The size of their jumbo burritos isn't an exaggeration – you will definitely leave full and happy.

11 p.m.

If you're an early riser, Bluestem Bistro is always a good stop for coffee and baked goods. But it's what the bistro does after dark that

is really special: a waffle on a stick. Available through the bistro's window from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., the cooks took a breakfast staple and made it portable. Top off a fluffy waffle with cream cheese icing, strawberries and chocolate sauce. This may be more of a dessert than a breakfast food, but it's definitely delicious.

AJ's NY Pizzeria has several specialty pizzas, and you really can't go wrong with any of them. However, the Pizza Bianco or "White Pie" is really something special. Topped with AJ's specialty seasoned ricotta cheese, mozzarella and parmesan, this pizza is a cheese lover's paradise. However, it's the garlic basil olive oil sauce that brings it together.

2 a.m.

For the late-nighter, the Varsity food truck is a must. Tucked back in an alley behind Porter's and Johnny Kaw's, the truck's best cure for a long night is a mac and cheese grilled cheese. You can get it with or without bacon, but that's just a silly question. Bacon makes everything better. Whether you've had a late night out in Aggieville or just need a late-night snack, the mac and cheese grilled cheese combines two of the best comfort foods into one delicious treat.

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RENEE DICK | THE COLLEGIAN

Emily McMillan, junior in communications, uses her laptop while sipping coffee. Bluestem Bistro is a popular bakery in Aggieville for students to visit.



RENEE DICK | THE COLLEGIAN

Adam Herbert, graduate student in communication studies, grabs dinner while studying for classes. Fuzzy's Tacos offers a huge menu sure to fill any appetite.



RENEE DICK | THE COLLEGIAN

Home to the famous chipotle raspberry bean dip, So Long Saloon offers a unique twist on the classic chips and dip. Located in Aggieville, this burger and bar joint has many tasty options.

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AGGIEVILLE
125th

Aggieville experiencing growth in late-night food variety, locations



TAYLOR ALDERMAN | THE COLLEGIAN

Even though it has only been open for about two years, the Varsity Truck in Aggieville has become a late night food staple, and its mac 'n' cheese grilled cheese is especially popular.

By JAMIE TEIXEIRA
THE COLLEGIAN

Aggieville is quickly turning into a late-night food hotspot for the Manhattan community. Though the bars stayed open late, choices for good food were extremely limited up to just a few years ago.

Locally-owned restaurants in Aggieville like CoCo Bolos, AJ's Pizza, the Varsity Truck and Bluestem Bistro are changing this by offering the Manhattan community more and increasingly better options to cure late-night cravings.

CoCo Bolos serves food until midnight Tuesday through Saturday. The restaurant launched its shorter, late-night menu just two years ago. The menu offers much of the same food as the day version, with the exception of steaks and other wood-fire grill items.

"(The grill) is a safety issue, we can't leave a hot fire unattended," Mark Desmet, general manager at CoCo Bolos, said. "When we close the building ... the embers are just dying out. We don't want to put the fire out with water or some other chemical because a lot of the flavor that you get is from the grill developing over the years."

CoCo Bolos appeals to customers with lots of late-night activities to accompany the food. Events such as concert films and chess nights happen weekly.

Since Varsity Donuts opened its food truck in 2012, it has become a must-have Thursday to Saturday. It started out as an outdoor room to make donuts, but quickly turned into a Aggieville staple.

"We have always cooked our donuts out of a food truck in the back parking lot," Leah Hyman, co-owner of Varsity Donuts, said. "Finally, about two years ago now, we cut a window on the side of the truck and swung it open."

The Varsity Truck introduced the grilled cheese mac and

cheese as a savory companion to the donuts and corn dogs.

"Grilled cheese is a mashup of two amazing comfort foods that everyone loves," Hyman said. "It's low-tech, but also just delicious and seems like a natural fit."

Hyman said Varsity started the late-night menu to keep the history and tradition of Manhattan's love for late-night donuts alive.

"Manhattan has this really rich tradition of late-night donuts, going back a few decades (when) there was a shop called Vern's and Swaney's; they were two shops that were open late at night and people would go back there at the end of their evening and get hot donuts," Hyman said. "There are a lot of Manhattan residents, older residents who have really fond memories of that and we want to keep the tradition alive."

The newest addition to late-night food scene in Aggieville is the Bluestem Bistro window. Bluestem Bistro launched its late-night window in the spring of 2014. People can stop by for food on the way down the main strip any time between 10 p.m. and 2:30 a.m.

"The owner's wife had the idea for the window," Annie Spence, manager at Bluestem Bistro, said. "They kind of wanted it to be a music reference to the window, we play like hip-hop and stuff sometimes out the window."

With a selection that ranges from Philly Cheesesteak tacos to Nutella waffles on a stick, the Bluestem window manages to combine diverse food choices with the lively atmosphere.

"We serve tacos, hoagies and waffle lollies," Spence said. "Sweet and savory, you can mix and match however you like."

The bistro's staff said they don't feel like the window is competing with other late night foods, like the Varsity Truck, but anything out there that makes the district a little more interesting is going to be good for everyone."

There's a strong sense of community and fun that comes with being able to be on the

streets of Aggieville when it's dark, and being able to walk up to (a place) you know and order something you wouldn't normally have ... to treat yourself and sit down with friends on the patio," Spence said. "The patio at night, with the lights and sounds of Aggieville, gives Manhattan's Aggieville an otherworldly feeling."

New food selections are not the only thing Bluestem Bistro is adding to Aggieville. Its window blasts music and on Saturday nights, Spence entertains the crowd with juggling or fire eating.

"Every now and again, I will go out and juggle and do street performances," Spence said. "We want it to be a bright spot in Aggieville at night, and an entertainment area that is kinda fun."

Kite's Grille and Bar staff acknowledged the appeal that the late-night food scene in Aggieville.

"We already have those customers captured," Alex Smith, manager at Kite's, said. "They are already here, and serving food to them could be something easy to do."

The idea might seem easy, but has proven itself challenging for big bars like Kite's.

"We've done a few things, but it's hard to keep track of some people that aren't always in the solid state of mind," Smith said.

According to Smith, the likelihood of Kite's entering the competition is slim.

"(There's) solid competition in late-night food," Smith said. "They are already doing it and they are good at it, and we're pretty busy with everything else we're doing (at) night."

Hyman said she doesn't look at other late-night food as competition, but as partners striving towards a common goal.

"I say the more the merrier," Hyman said. "Everything adds to Aggieville's late-night scene and Aggieville as a whole. I think anything out there that makes the district a little more interesting is going to be good for everyone."

